

Steering Committee Questions/Feedback from the Higher Education Advisory Committee

The following summarizes comments, questions, and feedback from Steering Committee members on the “Big Ideas” put forward by the Advisory Committee.

I. RAISE OVERALL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- What part of the discussion on *Opportunity Scholarships* was based on the ability of students to pay? Was there a discussion regarding a need based scholarship? Governor Gregoire stated that awardees must have a high school diploma to be eligible for the 13th year. This would ensure accountability in both the K-12 and Higher Education sectors.
- Are branch campuses effective in getting place bound students in the pipeline? The SC requested further county-by-county data on whether branch campuses have been effective. It was noted that we have a ways to go as Pierce and Clark County are still below the statewide average.
- Is there a Higher Education proposal regarding capital funding? Governor Gregoire stated that the capital question was legitimate and directed Victor Moore, OFM to put together a briefing document regarding the capital issue.

II. PROVIDE FAIR, SUFFICIENT AND STABLE FUNDING

- There was support for the “hold harmless” provision.
- What constitutes stable funding in this context? Denny responded that, at the least, it meant that the state could not give institutions authority to increase tuition while simultaneously decreasing state funding.
- Has the committee discussed means-tested tuition?
- Ideas to collaborate with private entities were discussed. One suggestion was to allow private foundations to pre-purchase portions of tuition then use the purchases for targeted populations like those eligible for 21st Century Scholarships. Another idea was to recruit private businesses to contribute funding for high demand degrees.

III. IMPROVE ARTICULATION AND TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS

- Need review of data such as the Gates Foundation High Achieving Schools that have assisted students in applying for higher education that can often be a barrier to access and transitions.

- Need further data on dual-credit programs including how they can be integrated into a mastery-based system.
- Need to further take a look at transfer issues. Governor Gregoire inquired why the transfer criteria is different for each institution? Who sets the criteria? Should this be, could this be uniform? It was suggested that the state mandate that all lower-division courses be made transferable.
- Within this topic area, there is great opportunity for efficiency. The conversation should include an operational scheme to look at all of the transition points.

IV. Improve Efficiency, Accountability and Governance

- Members discussed the possibility of integrating accountability into higher education to the same extent that it has been incorporated into the K-12 system. For instance, there is currently no faculty assessment. This might be done through performance contracts.

The following comments were in response to Ann Daley's opening presentation that introduced the P-20 Council idea.

- Could the P-20 Council have a legislative function? Currently the legislature passes laws without filter.
- Is the P-20 Council just creating a 345th board? Is there another way to take on governance (e.g. the state board)?
- It was further noted by the committee that the debate was not about the number of boards or districts, but achieving seamlessness between sectors.
- Governor Gregoire asked for volunteers from the SC to form an interim workgroup to discuss the topic of governance.

IV. Increase and sustain research capacity in Washington's higher education system

- There were no comments on this section.